

MINUTES OF THE WOOLPIT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 1 AUGUST 2023 AT 7.30 P.M. IN WOOLPIT INSTITUTE

Present: Dr Geake (Chair), Mr Gallagher, Mrs Symons, Mr Auchincloss and Mrs Jenkins.

In attendance: District Cllr Overett and 5 members of the public.

1. **Apologies for absence** were received from Mr Foster, Mr Hardiman and Mrs Ewans which were accepted.

2. **Public comment:** Mrs Symons gave an update on the Community Larder. It is hoped to get this established in the next few months and she has looked at a building which might be suitable. It is proposed to run this as an independent charity with a view to asking the Parish Council for some financial support. This will be an agenda item for the September meeting. Vertas taxi-bus service to Bury will continue until Christmas. Woolpit residents took up almost half the seats available in June & July but this may be different during August as there is no scheduled bus service during the school holidays. From August Elmswell PC are charging an administration fee of £25.00 for handling all bookings which will be shared equally between the four parishes. Empty seats have to be paid for which is subsidised by the four councils, our proportion is around £50.00 per month which is sustainable at the moment. Tracy Gardiner will continue to represent Woolpit at meetings of the four parishes and Vertas. Mr Auchincloss asked if the service can be extended to a bus to Stowmarket once a week. This suggestion will be passed to Vertas for consideration. Some residents have asked for benches on footpaths. They were asked to send a list of where they would like them and if possible the name of the landowner to the Clerk for investigation.

District Councillors' report. The last full Council meeting was successfully held at the Blackbourne Community Centre in Elmswell on 19 July. A previous Cabinet meeting was held at the John Peel Centre in Stowmarket and it is good to get our meetings out into the district. Mid Suffolk District Council discussed the issues relating to the administration of the Elections on 4 May. The Chief Executive commissioned both an internal and an external review of the processes. There had been issues relating to the receipt, processing and communication of the 1500 candidate nominations, and some of the Statements of Persons Nominated were incorrect and had to be republished. Despite these errors, no bearing on the election results was found. Lessons have been learnt and officers are planning early for the next set of elections – the Police and Crime Commissioner election next May. MSDC's annual canvas of every household is now underway; completing the form online or on paper ensures that those eligible to vote can do so. A representative mix of around 1 in 12 people across Mid Suffolk and Babergh are also currently receiving a Residents' Survey, seeking their views on a range of subjects such as local facilities, their local community, internet access, and wellbeing – results will be available in November. Local Authorities have to publish an annual Greenhouse Gas Report highlighting the greenhouse gas emissions and carbon footprint relating to their estate and operations. The report was discussed by full Council on 19 July and it was agreed to set up a 'Task and Finish' panel to review activities to help reach the net-zero target in 2030. The future for the exemplar housing project planned for the MSDC land adjacent to School Road in Elmswell is to be discussed by Cabinet on 8 August. A number of options have been considered and it is likely that the recommendation will be to defer any further progress on this site until Part 2 of the Joint Local Plan is adopted. A consultation event was held at the Blackbourne last month regarding the proposed line of pylons from Norwich to Tilbury. Any member of the public can respond to the consultation. MSDC agreed at the last council meeting to write to the Government to formally object to the scheme, because of its far-reaching impact on local communities. Cllr Mellen as leader of

MSDC spoke at the LGA conference at Bournemouth last week, suggesting that the Government should provide a clear national framework for the development of solar farms. There needs to be a balance between delivering renewable energy, food production and protecting our valuable landscape. A series of monthly drop-in sessions have been arranged alternating between Woolpit Teacups and Wesley Café in Elmswell. The next couple of sessions are: Tuesday 15 August 10 -12, Teacups Café and Tuesday 12 September 10 -12, Wesley Café.

District Cllr Overett advised that an application can be made for Locality Funding for help with the taxi-bus costs. Complaints that Rockylls Hall, Shelland is being used as a wedding venue have been passed to MSDC Planning Enforcement for investigation.

3. To receive declarations of interest.

Mr Auchincloss declared a pecuniary interest in item 8b as a member of Woolpit Tennis Club.

4. To approve the minutes of the meeting 4 July 2023.

The minutes were approved and signed.

5. Planning

a) to consider current applications

23/03169 Application under Section 73 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, variation of Condition 2 (approved plans and documents) of planning permission 22/04216 dated 18 October 2022 – erection of a hot food takeaway with office above. Land at Stag Café, Old A45 – object. The piecemeal development on this site is of concern, resulting in no cohesive plan for the area. Much of the parking area is being lost to the increasing amount of buildings, which could cause parking on the old A45 leading to a danger to traffic leaving the A14. Much of the traffic leaving the site to access the A14 will travel through the villages of Woolpit and Elmswell, which have unsuitable roads for this additional traffic. HGVs are supposed to use the Tot Hill interchange to access the A14 in either direction, but this is often ignored, and they instead use the totally unsuitable rural lanes which causes a danger to other road users and residents along Warren Lane, Wood Road, Borley Green and Heath Road in Woolpit. The effect of the development at the Stag Café site and the adjacent large business park has put considerable strain on highways infrastructure, and no further development should be granted here until a strategic traffic management plan identifies the current hazards and remedial measures are put in place. In addition, there is a strong likelihood that the extensive accommodation on the first floor will be used for domestic occupancy, and this should be specifically addressed by removing Permitted Development Rights which might allow this to happen, potentially setting a dangerous precedent for similar inappropriate use.

23/03346 Application for Outline planning permission (Access points to be considered, appearance, layout, landscaping and scale to be reserved). Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). Erection of 1 self-build bungalow (following demolition of existing buildings). Spooners, The Heath – object, over development of the site.

6. To receive correspondence/communications and deal with any matters.

SCC has advised that they have submitted a formal expression of interest in CiL funding to MSDC May 2023 bid window for the cycle path from Elmswell to Woolpit. However, as SCC is changing its highways contractor they haven't been able to do the preliminary work on the route by Elmswell Church. They are hoping to carry this out during the summer but SCC has decided not to submit a formal funding bid until May 2024. A meeting has been offered in the autumn which Cllrs voted to accept.

The following items have been circulated to Cllrs : Rural Services Network

Rural Funding Digest July, Rural Bulletin 11, 18, 25 July and 1 August. **MSDC** Hybrid facilities for MSDC Planning Committee meetings, family fun days, elections review,

advance notice of planning search page outage 10 & 11 August. **SCC** Greenest County Community network newsletter, RSPB news including Avila, WWF and nature funding, thermal imaging cameras loan project - expression of interest form, SCC apprentice opportunity, Thrive Renewables Benefit fund. **SALC** news bulletin 5, 17, 19, 24 July, training bulletin 11, 18 July, Suffolk Community Awards 2023, call for help – NSIPS (Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects) focus groups, service levels at SALC during August. **National Highways** A14 Haughley to Tothill reconstruction scheme July newsletter, notification of change to slip road layout at J46. **Woolpit Cricket Club** problems of seed heads coming from adjoining land owned by Hopkins Homes.

7. To approve accounts for payment.

Woolpit Village Hall £78.50 hire for disco 6 May + repair to damage in toilets, Proludic Ltd £1,986.00 Protect Gold package annual fee for equipment inspection, Woolpit Nurseries £100.00 filling of planters, Ron Raisey £114.20 editing August/September Woolpit Diary and Suffolk County Council £250.00 contribution to speed limit report. All accounts were approved and cheques issued. Payments by Standing Order/Direct Debit Mrs Fuller £1,056.91 July salary.

Woolpit PC as Trustees of Woolpit Recreation Ground Charity

8. To consider appointing solicitors and taking legal advice on

a) a proposed assignment of the Lease from the Trustees of Woolpit Cricket Club to a new company formed to run the Woolpit Cricket Club and confirm as Trustees of Woolpit Recreation Ground requirements for consent.

b) a draft lease submitted by Woolpit Tennis Club and take any necessary action.

In both cases we need to appoint solicitors to act on behalf of the charity. The Cricket Club lease already specifies that our costs must be met by WCC. Woolpit Tennis Club have also been told that they will need to pay our costs to which they have agreed.

Both clubs use Ashtons Legal as their solicitors. When the Cricket Club lease was granted WRGC used Gross and Co to act on its behalf. Gross and Co are now part of Ellisons Solicitors. The simplest solution would be for the trustee to ask Ellisons to act for WRGC. It was proposed, seconded and carried to ask Ellisons to act for the charity on both matters and to get undertakings for costs. *Action: the Clerk*

9. Date and time of the next Parish Council meeting – Tuesday 5 September 2023. Noted.

The meeting closed at 7.52 p.m.

Signed.....approved

Dated.....5 September 2023.....